



Commissioner Recognizes Veterans on Flag Day

Below, in a speech given on Flag Day, June 14, at the Indiana Veterans' Home, State Health Commissioner Greg Wilson, M.D. honors Indiana's veterans, Veterans' Home staff, and volunteers.

This is a special day—a special Flag Day.

It was 225 years ago today that the first flag of the United States was authorized by Congressional Resolution.

It was just over nine months ago, in the wake of the horror and tragedy of September 11th, that—as one of my staff observed—we got the flag back.

"Old Glory," which for several decades had been used by many Americans to indicate their political leanings, is back. Once again, it is the symbol of our freedom, our belief in America, for all the world to see.

That is what makes this Flag Day special. Every American has come to appreciate more than ever the freedom, the democracy that our nation stands for and the flag represents.

But to the residents of the Indiana Veterans' Home, this appreciation of the flag is nothing new. These Hoosiers, who have sacrificed and served this nation in order to preserve our freedom and our democracy, know first-hand the meaning of the flag of the United States of America.

This facility is home to 159 World War II veterans, 69 Korean War veterans, 45 Vietnam War veterans, two Desert Storm veterans, and 85 widows and spouses of veterans. It is our privilege today to honor not only the American Flag, but also the courageous men and women who have given so much to defend all that it represents.

Please join me for a moment to show our appreciation of their contribution to our nation.

Indiana can be proud not only of its veterans, but also of its Veterans' Home.

This picturesque facility and its dedicated staff provide Indiana's eligible wartime veterans and their spouses with a thera-

peutic environment that enhances health while emphasizing quality of life.

In the past six years, the Home has expanded its physical and occupational therapy and speech services, and increased the residents' involvement in decision-making.

The Indiana Veterans' Home receives outstanding support from state and local Veterans Organizations and their Auxiliaries.

The excellent care at the Veterans' Home wouldn't be possible without the 155 community volunteers, who gave more than 10,000 hours of their time serving the residents last year.

Among the current residents are veterans from most of Indiana's 92 counties, including 10 Purple Heart recipients and two former prisoners of war.

The average length of stay for residents here is about five years, but one veteran has been at the Veterans' Home for 35 years.

The Veterans' Home is subject to the same annual state survey as private nursing homes, and has had two recent zero deficiency surveys. And as State Health Commissioner, I can attest that a deficiency-free survey is no small feat.

The Indiana Veterans' Home is also inspected each year by the Veterans' Administration, and had no serious deficiencies in its last inspection.

Although the state's current budget crisis has required a one-million-dollar budget reduction at this facility, the Indiana Veterans' Home remains committed to providing the best quality of care possible.

Bob Hawkins and his staff are to be congratulated for the exceptional care they provide Indiana's veterans, widows, and spouses.

This is, indeed, a special Flag Day, as the Red, White, and Blue now has a deeper meaning for all Americans in this, the 225th anniversary of the American flag. It's an honor to be part of your Flag Day Program this year.

Thank you.

— STATE HEALTH COMMISSIONER GREG WILSON, M.D.

Black & Minority Health Fair Screenings Set for July 18

The Indiana State Department of Health will sponsor the 17th annual Black & Minority Health Fair on July 18 - 21, 2002 with the theme, "Health Free For All."

What participants will be getting for free is more than \$500 worth of screenings, including HIV/STD testing, diabetes risk assessment, and glaucoma and cholesterol screenings.

Through a process called "One Stop-One Stick," individuals will be able to have their blood drawn only once for an entire series of screenings. Participants may also register their bone marrow through the Central Indiana Regional

Blood Center.

"We are focusing a significant amount of attention on diabetes this year," said Danielle Patterson, director, Office of Minority Health.

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STREETLIGHT-POLE BANNER, (right) designed by George Murff, Office of Public Affairs, heralds the Health Fair in Indianapolis.



State Launches Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program

This year, the Indiana State Department of Health is piloting the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program to offer eligible local seniors a way to add fresh, nutritious produce to their diets.

Bloomington, Lafayette, Muncie, and North Vernon are the first four locations for this program in Indiana, which also provides participating seniors with nutrition education and opportunities for physical activity.

Eligible seniors in this pilot program are beginning to receive checks to purchase fruits and vegetables at the local farmers' markets in the four pilot areas. Only recently harvested, unprocessed, locally grown fruits and vegetables are eligible for purchase with the checks.



KATHY LAUERMAN
ISDH Farmers' Market
program coordinator

"It is a wonderful program—a real win-win for everyone," said Kathleen Lauerman, Farmers' Market Program coordinator. "Seniors can get such great benefits from this program, both in terms of nutrition and a chance to socialize. We are pleased to be able to launch it this year."

"Indiana farmers produce a great variety of delicious fruits and vegetables," said Lt.

Governor Joe Kernan, commissioner of agriculture. "This program provides an excellent opportunity for older Hoosiers to enjoy our quality produce, and for local farmers to expand their customer base."

According to Kernan, Indiana ranks second in the nation in the production of tomatoes for processing, fifth in cantaloupes, sixth in

watermelons, seventh in snap beans and cucumbers for procession, and ninth in the production of blueberries.

The Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program is administered by the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program at the State Department of Health, and the checks are distributed by the local agencies on aging in Bloomington, Lafayette, Muncie, and North Vernon.

"To minimize costs, we used well-established local farmers' market programs, and the local agencies on aging are distributing the checks at no charge to us," Lauerman said.

The four participating agencies on aging are:

- **Bloomington:** Agency on Aging, 7500 W. Reeves Rd., Bloomington, which serves Monroe and Owen counties;
- **Lafayette:** Agency on Aging & Community Services, Inc., 660 N. 36th Street, Lafayette, which serves Benton, Carroll, Clinton, Fountain, Tippecanoe, Montgomery, Warren,



IN NORTH VERNON, vegetable farmer Andrea Short (left) hands customer a basket of new potatoes at the Jennings County Farmers' Market, which is located at a shelter house in the City Park at North Vernon. Short accepts Senior Farmers' Market Program checks.

and White counties;

- **Muncie:** LifeStream Services, 1701 Pilgrim Blvd., Yorktown, which serves Blackford, Delaware, Grant, Henry, Jay, Madison, and Randolph counties; and
- **North Vernon:** Aging & In-Home Services of South Central Indiana, 1635 N. National Rd., Columbus, which serves Bartholomew, Brown, Decatur, Jackson, and Jennings counties.

"Senior Farmers' Market is a fabulous opportunity for seniors in our area," said Lori McClain, nutrition manager for LifeStream Services. "Our clients will enjoy not only the fresh, Indiana-grown produce, but also the camaraderie and socialization with other shoppers, local produce farmers, and the Market staff."

To be eligible for the program, an individual must be age 60 or older, a resident of a county served by one of the four participating agencies on aging, and must take part in a financially based assistance program like Medicaid, energy and heating assistance, or meal assistance.

On June 12, 2002, the U.S. Department of Agriculture earmarked \$59,900 for Indiana for the Senior Farmers' Market Program next year, contingent upon the state providing funds to cover all administrative costs associated with processing and distributing the checks.



A FARMERS' MARKET VENDOR in Muncie draws customers. Among them are qualified seniors who have received Senior Farmers' Market checks from LifeStream Services in Muncie. The Indiana State Department of Health oversees the distribution of the checks to LifeStream and three other Indiana area agencies on aging.

State Vital Records Walk-in Service To Be Limited to Midday Hours

Beginning Monday, July 22, orders for birth and death certificates will be taken in person at the Indiana State Department of Health on weekdays only from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

The reduction in hours to walk-in customers at the State Department of Health's Vital Records office in downtown Indianapolis is the result of cost-saving plans the agency has identified to help address the state's budget situation.

Application forms will be available at the main reception desk at the State Department of Health at 2 North Meridian Street during regular business hours, 8:15 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. on weekdays. The forms can be picked up and returned to the reception desk

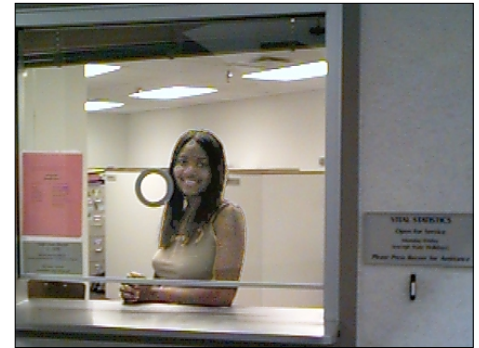
during regular business hours. But certificates will be delivered to customers only during the new Vital Records service hours, during the lunchtime, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

The public is encouraged to order birth and death certificates by contacting the local health department in the county where the birth or death occurred whenever possible.

Information about how to contact the local health departments and the fees they charge is available on the State Department of Health's Web site, at <http://www.IN.gov/isdh>, by clicking on Birth and Death Certificates. Also on that Web site, the public can:

- apply for birth certificates online or by fax,

- apply for death certificates by fax, or
- download the forms to use for applying in person at the State Department of Health.



CHRISHAUNA JOHNSON (above) is ready to greet walk-up customers at the ISDH Vital Records window at 2 North Meridian St.

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"In addition to the glucose screening, we have added foot care screenings and information on the Guidelines for Diabetes Care, nutrition, exercise, and eye exams," Patterson said.

Diabetes is more common among African Americans, Hispanics/Latinos, American Indians, Asian Americans, and Pacific Islanders. Other risk factors include having a family history of diabetes, being 20 percent above ideal body weight and getting little or no exercise, being age 45 or older, or having given birth to a baby weighing more than nine pounds.

For a complete list of available screenings, visit the State Department of Health's Web site at www.IN.gov/isdh and click on the Black & Minority Health Fair link.

The State Department of Health sponsors the Black & Minority Health Fair each year during Indiana Black Expo's Summer Celebration to address issues affecting the health of minority populations in Indiana.

"The Health Fair provides us with a wonderful opportunity to educate and screen people on a wide range of health issues," said Martha Bonds, director of the Health Fair. "For instance, in 2002, we provided more than 102,000 health screenings. People

want these services, and we are more than happy to provide them."

Although racial and ethnic minorities make up less than 12 percent of Indiana's population, the state's 2001 Minority Health Report indicates that these minorities have a disproportionately high incidence rate for many serious diseases. The leading causes of death among minorities in Indiana mirror those of the national leading causes of death: heart disease, cancer, stroke, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, diabetes, and infant mortality.

The goal for the Health Fair is to offer free screenings, health education, and counseling services to Black and other minority populations, especially those individuals who lack access to health care.

The Black & Minority Health Fair is made possible in part through the cooperation of the following community/corporate sponsors:

- Aventis Pharmaceuticals
- Citizens Health Corporation
- Clarian Health Network
- Clear Channel Outdoor
- Community Hospitals Indianapolis
- Downtown Park and Shuttle
- Indiana Tobacco Prevention and Cessation Agency

- Indianapolis Recorder
- Marion County Health Department
- Novo Nordisk Pharmaceuticals, Inc.
- Oncology & Hematology Associates, Inc.
- Radio One
- Roche Diagnostics
- Roche Pharmaceuticals, Inc.
- St. Francis Hospital & Health Centers
- St. Vincent Hospitals and Health Services
- State Department of Health, Breast and Cervical Cancer Program and Division of HIV/STD
- Walgreens
- Wishard Health Services
- WISH-TV

The Health Fair will be held at the Indiana Convention Center, 100 South Capitol Avenue, in Exhibit Hall D during the following hours:

- Thursday, July 18 from 5-8 p.m.,
- Friday, July 19 from 1-8 p.m.,
- Saturday, July 20 from 10-8 p.m., and
- Sunday, July 21 from noon-8 p.m.

State Health Officials Urge Hoosiers to "Get Tested for HIV"

On Thursday, June 27, the Indiana State Department of Health sponsored Indiana's 2002 "Get Tested for HIV Day."

National HIV Testing Day is an educational campaign that encourages those at risk of HIV infection to seek counseling and testing for the virus.

The impact of HIV/AIDS within the minority communities has been devastating, especially among African Americans. African Americans accounted for nearly half of the 46,400 HIV/AIDS cases reported in the U.S. during 1999. The Hispanic and Latino population is growing within Indiana and the United States, and Hispanics and Latinos accounted for 9,021 HIV/AIDS cases in 1999 (18 percent of the total).

According to the March 2002 HIV/STD Quarterly Report, there are 1,410 African-American men, 187 Hispanic and Latino men, 306 African-American women, and 24 Hispanic and Latino women with AIDS in Indiana. The report also showed that 995 African-American males, 130 Hispanic and Latino men, 343 African-American females, and 27 Hispanic and Latino females have been infected with HIV.

"Focusing more attention on education and testing has led to an increase in HIV screening numbers," said Michael Butler, director, HIV/STD Division, State Department of Health. "We are going to continue promoting HIV/AIDS prevention messages to those who are at risk and encourage them to know their HIV status."

"This campaign is a collaborative effort between the State Department of Health's Office of Minority Health, local minority health coalitions, HIV/AIDS community organizations, and health departments promoting prevention messages," said Butler. "In 2001, we administered 652 tests as part of the Get Tested for HIV program, which was a gradual increase from 394 tests in 2000. We hope to see additional increases this year."

HIV testing and counseling was available for free in Elkhart, Fort

Wayne, Gary, and Indianapolis on June 27.

Special events to promote the Get Tested Campaign were held around the state on June 27.



MOBILE TESTING VAN, featuring video games, pop music, and movies on large screen TV, is effective in drawing youthful crowd within range of offers of one-on-one HIV/AIDS education and on-site testing by staff during HIV Testing Day, June 27.

Staff with the State Department of Health and the AIDS Taskforce serving Northeast Indiana appeared at a news conference highlighting the Get Tested Campaign on June 27 at 8:00 a.m. at the Youth Life Skills Education Center in Fort Wayne.

The AIDS Taskforce sponsored HIV testing and counseling at a variety of locations in Fort Wayne throughout the day.

Brothers United in Indianapolis staffed a mobile unit on June 27, which visited neighborhoods like Douglas Park, Tarkington Park, and Washington Park and the Forest Manor Multi Service Center. The van was provided by "Working for Togetherness" in Chicago, and not only offered privacy for HIV testing and counseling, but also computer games for individuals waiting to be tested. The van was operated from noon to 6:00 p.m.

The Elkhart County Health Department, in collaboration with the AIDS Community Action Group, sponsored "Taking It To The Street," at Booker T. Washington Park on Benham and Indiana Avenue (in front of the Elkhart Housing Authority) from 3:00 to 9:00 p.m. on June 27. The event featured an

HIV positive speaker, a substance abuse speaker, HIV counseling and testing, refreshments, and music. The goal was to educate and screen 300 people.

HIV/AIDS counseling and testing sites are available throughout Indiana. Most testing services are free, although some locations charge a modest fee. People at risk can also receive a test at their physician's office or at their local health department.

Individuals can request the standard serum (blood) test, the OraSure (oral) test, the HIV-1 urine test, home testing kits, or rapid testing methods.

A list of statewide HIV/STD Counseling and

Testing sites can be found on the State Department of Health's Web site at: <http://www.in.gov/isdh>. Click on Public Health Programs and then select HIV/STD.

These services are provided under a grant from the CDC through the State Department of Health, which also offers free courses in counseling for HIV/STD risk reduction.

For more information on the "Get Tested for HIV" campaign, contact Trevor Bradley, Division of HIV/STD, at 317-233-7743 or Danielle Patterson, Office of Minority Health, at 317-233-7596.



MICHAEL BUTLER, director, HIV/STD Program

Indiana State Department of Health **Express**

The *Indiana State Department of Health Express* is a bi-weekly publication for ISDH employees and stakeholders. To submit news items, call (317) 233-7336 or send information to: ISDH Express, Office of Public Affairs, 2 N. Meridian St., Section 2E, Indianapolis, IN 46204-3003. Inquiries should be directed to:

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Lectures, Experience Sharing, and Camaraderie Featured at 5th Indiana Rural Health Conference, June 12-14

If you're a health professional toiling in the trenches somewhere in rural Indiana, chances are that your photo may appear on this or the following page if you attended the 5th Annual Indiana Rural Health Conference—*Opening Doors for Healthy Rural Communities*, held June 12-14 in French Lick.

The conference addressed the thorny issues confronting primary care clinicians, public and environmental health care employees, as well as others interested in rural health care development. Speakers included individual practitioners, as well as representatives from federal, state, and regional agencies, hospitals, institutions of higher education, and private provider organiza-

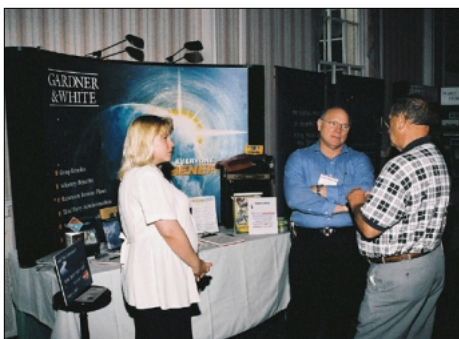
tions. These experts discussed public and rural health care delivery, human resources challenges, and financial issues affecting rural health clinics and hospitals.

The conference was planned and implemented in accordance with the Essential Areas and Policies for the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) through joint sponsorship of the Indiana University School of Medicine and the Indiana Rural Health Association.

The conference receives federal financial support administered by the Indiana State Department of Health, Community Health Development Services, Office of Rural Health.



More Photos— 220 Attendees participated in the 2002 Indiana Rural Health Conference: *OPENING DOORS for Healthy Rural Communities*



– Conference photos by Daniel Axler



Indiana State Department of Health **NewsLink**

The *Indiana State Department of Health NewsLink* is a monthly publication for local health departments. To submit news items, call (317) 233-7336 or send information to: ISDH NewsLink, Office of Public Affairs, 2 N. Meridian St., Section 2E, Indianapolis, IN 46204-3003. Inquiries should be directed to:

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